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Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly: review of the relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups: Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002

Third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002: preliminary assessment

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/5, entitled "Modalities for the third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002." The report provides an analysis of the preliminary findings of the third review and appraisal exercise, including the identification of prevalent and emerging issues and related policy options. The report also includes information on the regional preparations for the third review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, including actions, activities and the utilization of a bottom-up participatory approach.



I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2015/5, entitled "Modalities for the third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002", in which the Council requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission for Social Development, at its fifty-fifth session, a report including an analysis of the preliminary findings of the third review and appraisal exercise, including the identification of prevalent and emerging issues and related policy options.

2. In view of the timeline for carrying out the third review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, and given that the global review will take place in 2018, Member States have not yet presented their national reports to the United Nations regional commissions. Therefore, the findings outlined in the present report are preliminary in nature and are based on submissions prepared by the regional commissions using supporting information available to the Secretariat, covering the period from 2012 to 2016. The report of the Secretary-General for the global review to be held at the fifty-sixth session of the Commission for Social Development will provide the basis for suggested policy options for the consideration of Member States.

3. The purpose of the report is to inform the Commission of the preliminary main findings of the third review and appraisal exercise, including the identification of key priority areas and regional perspectives on the challenges and opportunities of ageing. The report also includes information about the regional preparations to date for the third review and appraisal exercise, including actions, activities and the utilization of a bottom-up participatory approach.

II. Process to date at the regional level

4. With regard to resolution 2015/5, the Commission invited Member States to identify actions they had taken since the second review and appraisal exercise and encouraged them, *inter alia*, to invite organizations of older persons¹ to participate in the review process at the national and regional levels.

5. In the same resolution, the regional commissions were requested to continue to facilitate the review and appraisal exercise at the regional level by, *inter alia*, organizing regional review meetings, providing an analysis of the main findings and identifying key priority action areas by the end of 2017. As part of the procedure for review and appraisal laid out by the Commission, individualized approaches to the review and appraisal exercise are being taken by each regional commission to tailor the process to their respective operational realities.

6. The present section provides information on the activities planned by the regional commissions to support the third review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action.

7. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) undertook research activities on ageing and development in small island developing States in Africa as part of a field

¹ Those 60 years of age or older.

project on the demographic dividend in Africa. The research was built on findings and recommendations of the 2013 Africa regional review of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, as well as on the report by ECA on the second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. ECA seeks to harmonize and coordinate the efforts of partnerships, programmes and specialized agencies through the Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, for which it serves as the secretariat, towards enhanced inter-agency arrangements regarding older persons in the regional economic communities and in its member States. In January 2016, the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa was adopted by the Assembly of the African Union at its twenty-sixth ordinary session. The ratification of the Protocol is anticipated to increase awareness of the role of Governments in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals that are most relevant to older persons. ECA has developed a survey for Member States covering all areas of the Plan of Action, supplemented with questions regarding sources of data on older persons. The Commission is further cooperating with local affiliates of the civil society organization HelpAge International in 15 African countries in the collection of qualitative information from older persons themselves. A technical steering committee was established to coordinate the review and appraisal process, set the guidelines, identify the tools needed and disseminate the questionnaire to focal points in the selected member States. ECA plans to prepare an analytical report on the issues faced by older persons in Africa, highlighting the nexus between those issues and the Goals.

8. The third cycle of review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action was launched in May 2015 by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) with the issuance of guidelines for the preparation of national reports over the course of 2016. The guidelines were prepared by the Bureau of the Commission's Working Group on Ageing, together with the secretariat of ECE, and suggested that the national reports be structured around the four main goals of the 2012 Vienna Ministerial Declaration.² The guidelines included a list of 22 suggested active ageing indicators, which were initially selected by the expert group on the Active Ageing Index³ in order to reflect the outcomes of ageing policies and to measure the untapped potential of older people. Two capacity-building workshops were held to address data gaps with respect to active ageing indicators. The first workshop was held in Geneva in November 2015, and the second, a regional capacity-development workshop, was held in Minsk in June 2016 and hosted by the National Statistical Committee of Belarus. ECE plans to prepare a synthesis report based on the reports received from its member States that outlines major trends in the region, identifies key priority action areas and suggests policy responses. The synthesis report will be launched at the Ministerial Conference on Ageing, to be held in Lisbon in September 2017, on the theme "A sustainable society for all ages: realizing the potential of living longer".

9. To ensure wider involvement of various stakeholders and older people themselves in the third review and appraisal process in the region, the Working Group on Ageing set up organizing committees for non-governmental organizations

² ECE/AC.30/2012/3.

³ Available from www1.unece.org/stat/platform/display/AAI/Active+Ageing+Index+Home

and research forums to contribute to preparations for the Ministerial Conference on Ageing. In addition, a number of countries plan to hold national conferences on ageing before the end of 2016 to ensure consultations with non-governmental organizations in their report preparation, with several countries of Eastern Europe receiving financial and expert support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to facilitate such participatory processes.

10. The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is providing technical assistance to member States in the region that have requested help in undertaking their national review processes regarding the Madrid Plan of Action and the regional plan as expressed in the San José Charter on the Rights of Older Persons in Latin America and the Caribbean. ECLAC will also organize the Fourth Regional Intergovernmental Conference on Ageing in Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in Paraguay in 2017.

11. To support policy development on ageing in the region since the last review and appraisal, the ECLAC office in Port of Spain organized a conference on ageing, elder abuse and the rights of older people, held in Roseau on 30 November and 1 December 2015. In addition, ECLAC published a range of material on issues related to older persons, including thematic reports on their care needs; an evaluation of policy guidelines and access to credit by older persons; a publication on ageing in the Caribbean and the rights of older persons; a book entitled "Autonomy and dignity in old age: theory and practice of policies on the rights of older people" and another on the theme of ageing and public institutions in Latin America and the Caribbean; as well as an online bulletin on ageing and development. In June 2016, ECLAC held a technical seminar on public institutions and ageing, with the goal of examining existing institutional alternatives in the region and deepening the analysis of the constraints and challenges facing government institutions dealing with ageing from a human rights perspective. In collaboration with the Senate of Chile and the country's National Service for Older Persons, ECLAC held an international seminar in July 2016 on the protection of the human rights of older persons in Latin America and the Caribbean, which involved more than 500 older persons and experts from Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba and Mexico. ECLAC organized the second follow-up meeting on the San José Charter, in partnership with the National Service for Older Persons, from 16 to 18 November 2016 at its headquarters in Santiago.

12. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) established a steering group to oversee the third regional review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action, in cooperation with the regional offices of the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNFPA and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as with HelpAge International. Several member States expressed interest in carrying out national consultations to assess such progress, and ESCAP is working closely with all partners concerned to enable those stakeholder meetings to be as inclusive and comprehensive as possible. In collaboration with a number of partners, ESCAP will provide technical consulting to the countries in the region that requested assistance in undertaking their respective third review and appraisal cycle of the Plan of Action at the national level. A regional intergovernmental meeting for the review of the Plan of Action is envisaged for September 2017, with a preparatory expert meeting to be held in May 2017. A survey was launched in February 2016 to track progress on the implementation of the Plan of Action, with

several responses already received, including information on government focal points. Analysis of the survey will be undertaken and published by ESCAP. In addition, a regional expert forum on population ageing was held at ESCAP headquarters on 12 and 13 July 2016, bringing together government focal points on population ageing, development practitioners, experts and civil society. The meeting increased awareness of the key challenges to and opportunities for effectively addressing population ageing and promoting the rights of older persons in the Asia-Pacific region in the context of the third cycle of the review and appraisal of the Plan of Action. Meeting participants further reviewed and shared good practices in addressing long-term care needs and considered policies to formulate a comprehensive framework for the long-term care of older persons in the region. Participants discussed strategies to assess progress at the regional and country levels in the implementation of the Plan of Action, proposing concrete follow-up actions within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), in addition to substantive research on issues related to older persons, mostly in the areas of social protection, poverty reduction and conflict and emergency situations, is planning to hold a regional meeting on the third review and appraisal in 2017. The Commission informed its member States of the steps taken and milestones reached in the third regional review and appraisal cycle and requested the nomination of national focal points on ageing. ESCWA, in cooperation with UNFPA, the Centre for Studies on Ageing and a group of experts, is finalizing a questionnaire that addresses the three priority directions of the Madrid Plan of Action. The questionnaire aims to assess the progress made by member States in the implementation of the Plan of Action, the obstacles countries are facing and the remaining gaps in implementation. The questionnaire is expected to be sent to the nominated focal points in member countries by the end of 2016. Analysis of the survey will be undertaken and published by ESCWA and presented at the third regional review meeting. The aim of the meeting is to review progress made in the implementation of the Plan of Action and to identify the main challenges, opportunities and issues of priority for the region. It will provide a platform for countries to present their national experiences, share lessons learned and good practices and reflect on two issues of importance to older persons in the region, namely, social protection and emergency situations. The main findings of the meeting, in particular the priority action areas and good practices identified and the policy responses suggested, will serve as an input to the global review.

Contribution of the United Nations system to the third review and appraisal

14. UNFPA recently began a five-year project in collaboration with Statistics Korea, the central organization for statistics in the Republic of Korea. The first major activity of the project is the preparation of a stocktaking report on the theme "The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: where are we fifteen years later?" that will measure progress in fulfilling the commitments made by Governments during the Second World Assembly on Ageing, in 2002, and in implementing the recommendations of the Madrid Plan of Action. The report will focus on a select number of major issues under each of the three priority directions of the Plan of Action: (a) older persons and development; (b) advancing health and

well-being into older age; and (c) ensuring enabling and supportive environments. The report will be the contribution of UNFPA to the third review and appraisal. It will illustrate progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action by region, providing specific country examples, and include the voices of older persons gleaned from focus group discussions in select countries. The report will highlight key issues of particular importance in each region, point to emerging concerns and provide recommendations for action to improve the quality of life of older persons. In addition, UNFPA is supporting HelpAge International in coordinating the above-mentioned series of focus groups to elicit the views of older women and men on the impact of national actions relating to the Plan of Action's three priority directions. Focus group meetings will be conducted in both rural and urban settings in a number of countries. The results of those meetings will contribute to the Fund's review report.

III. Preliminary findings on prevalent and emerging issues and related policy options

A. Social protection

15. All older persons have the right to a decent standard of living. The growth in the proportion and number of older persons highlights both the importance and the challenge of staving off poverty and income insecurity in old age. Governments in all regions recognize their role in reducing the vulnerabilities associated with old age and the need to adapt to the rapid pace of population ageing and changing social norms. The adoption and strengthening of social protection schemes for older persons as a strategy to tackle poverty and exclusion is thus in evidence in many countries, and the issue has been cited by each regional commission as a regional priority.

16. The income security of older persons increasingly relies on old-age pensions. Most older persons do not possess adequate savings or other assets to provide for their well-being and avoid poverty throughout old age. The eventual functional decline of older workers limits the stability of their income from employment. Age-based discrimination in the labour force also affects the incomes of older persons, in particular in developed countries.⁴ At the same time, decreasing family sizes and growing labour demands on family members mean that fewer older persons can depend on relatives to assist with unmet financial needs. Between 2010 and 2012, only 51.5 per cent of all people above statutory pensionable age received an old-age pension.⁵ Most older persons with pension coverage live in developed countries and worked or continue to work in the formal sector. Although the level of coverage in Europe and North America exceeds 90 per cent, levels are far lower in other regions. In Latin America and the Caribbean and in Asia and the Pacific, levels are close to the global average, with 56 per cent and 47 per cent of older persons, respectively, receiving a pension. In North Africa and the Middle East, around 1 in 3

⁴ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Live Longer, Work Longer* (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2006).

⁵ ILO, *World Social Protection Report 2014/15: building economic recovery, inclusive development and social justice* (Geneva, 2014).

older persons has a pension (37 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively), and in sub-Saharan Africa, 17 per cent of older persons, fewer than 1 in 5, receives a pension. Even where pension schemes are in place, many fall short of providing income security to some or all beneficiaries, with benefits that are insufficient to meet basic needs and to stay out of poverty.

17. During the period between 2000 and 2010, important gains were made in expanding pension coverage in many countries, including to informal sector workers.⁵ Since 2010, however, many developed and developing countries have been reducing expenditures or experiencing the effects of having done so during the second phase of the recent global economic crisis. Between 2010 and 2013, pension reforms, including raising retirement ages, increasing contributions, lowering benefits and lowering pension tax exemptions, were the fourth most common adjustment measure, undertaken by 47 developing countries and 39 high-income countries.⁶ Some developing countries, however, have directed the proceeds of their various adjustment measures, which ranged from pension reforms to reduced subsidies, towards targeted safety nets for those living in deepest poverty. In general, high-income countries have limited various social protection benefits, whereas many middle-income countries have strengthened their social protection systems, and some lower-income countries have created or broadened narrow schemes that provide a low level of benefits. At present, more than 20 low-income and middle-income countries have achieved universal or nearly universal social protection schemes, and more than 100 others are extending the coverage and benefits of schemes to new social groups.⁶ Old-age pensions are in fact the most frequently realized element of universal social protection.

18. Pension reforms have also been a response to demographic changes, whereby there is a declining number of working-age persons to pay into pension systems and other support mechanisms for older persons. Although many countries had initiated reforms prior to the crisis to ensure the long-term sustainability of their pension systems, the economic crisis triggered more severe spending cuts.⁷

19. Since the second review and appraisal, Governments have made significant efforts to establish, expand and improve pension coverage, as well as to secure the long-term integrity of existing pension systems. Many countries have extended the reach of pension schemes. For example, in 2016, Argentina introduced a universal pension for older persons, guaranteeing a minimum income to persons over 65 years of age who had not made any pension contributions or did not qualify for the standard Government pension plan. Similarly, Nicaragua now provides a reduced pension to older persons who have not met a minimum period of contributions. In 2016, Kuwait enacted a law on social protection for older persons that included several entitlements such as the right to a monthly allowance and free health care. In 2013, India established the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority

⁵ According to ILO, universal social protection includes adequate cash transfers for all who need them, especially children; benefits and support for people of working age in case of maternity, disability, work injury or for those without jobs; and pensions for all older persons. Such protection can be provided through social insurance, tax-funded social benefits, social assistance services, public works programmes and other schemes guaranteeing basic income security. See also World Bank, "World Bank, ILO announce new push for universal social protection", press release (21 September 2016).

and encouraged voluntary participation in the pension fund through a scheme called “NPS-Lite”, with the provision of annual co-contributions. In Zambia, the National Social Protection Policy, which was approved in 2014, incorporated a social cash transfer scheme for vulnerable older persons. In Burkina Faso, the National Social Protection Policy of 2012 also included cash transfers to older persons living in poverty and financing for a national pension fund for public civil servants. Indonesia is working on pension reform to expand coverage and to include the informal sector.

20. Governments have also taken a range of measures to improve existing pension benefits. The Government of Estonia is indexing pensions to the rate of inflation and is committed to keeping average pensions exempt from income tax. In 2013, it added a pension supplement for older persons who were raising a child, and plans to implement a support scheme in 2017 for pensioners who live alone. Côte d’Ivoire also increased pension amounts based on changes in the cost of living. Mongolia has made it a priority to undertake such plans and has already equalized both the basic pension amount and the retirement age for men and women. Between 2011 and 2014, it significantly increased funds directed towards pensions. Recently, the Government of Georgia also increased public spending on pensions, while Kazakhstan increased its pension payments. In 2015, the Russian Federation implemented a new procedure to ensure an adequate pension level.

21. Several pension reforms have been undertaken to unify disparate schemes and otherwise improve their efficiency. A prominent example is the merger by China in 2014 of its rural and urban pension schemes into a unified public scheme for all employees, which, *inter alia*, equalized pension rights and opportunities and improved the portability of pension entitlements.⁵ Similarly, the Republic of Korea conducted a comprehensive pension reform in 2015, merging its national pension scheme with its basic social pension.⁷

22. Many Governments also have been taking or exploring measures to improve the financial efficiency of pension schemes with a view to their sustainability, in particular by raising pension contributions and increasing the age of retirement, the latter reflecting increased life expectancies. Indonesia has plans to increase its contribution rates, while Côte d’Ivoire increased its social contribution rate for employees and employers and also raised its retirement age in 2012. In 2014, Zambia increased its retirement age from 55 to 65, while retaining the option to retire at 55. Jordan raised the age of early retirement. Retirement ages are also becoming more flexible. In 2015, the Russian Federation created the opportunity to take later retirement, while the Government of Estonia agreed to discuss the possibility of developing a pension system with a flexible retirement age. Estonia is also considering the promotion of employer pensions.

⁷ ESCAP, “Income security for older persons in the Republic of Korea”, Social Development Division-Social Policy and Population Section Project Working Paper Series (Bangkok, ESCAP, 2015).

B. Care

23. At this early stage in the review process, issues of health and care continue to be high on the agenda in all regions, with some particular nuances and developments in terms of focus.

Promotion of “ageing in place” in the community with due regard to individual preferences and affordable housing options

24. Efforts to promote ageing in place,⁸ de-institutionalization and care within the community have continued to expand. In many cases, that has included an approach that ECE has termed “active care”, which supports and empowers older persons to have choices and participate in decisions about their own care.⁹ For example, the Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland approved the Care Act of 2014, which reorganized the care and support system for the first time in 60 years and brought together various pieces of legislation. The aim was to make the system easier to understand and give greater control to those in need of support and their families. The Act, *inter alia*, set new criteria for the entitlement of clients to care from local authorities and changed and standardized the assessment of those requesting support, basing the assessments on interviews with the client that take into account their wishes and objectives, as well as the need for informal support for caregivers. In addition, the Act provides greater regulation of those providing professional care.¹⁰ This trend towards choice in social care in general reflects a human rights-based approach to policymaking and legislation in the care sector.

25. The Government of Estonia notes that the country’s social welfare policy for the period 2016-2023 was developed with support being provided by the European Social Fund and the European Regional Fund until 2020. The policy is guided by the principle of providing support to enable older persons and their family members to remain employed and independent and to live at home as long as possible. It is oriented towards prevention, reduction of the need for institution-based care and the promotion of de-institutionalization through, *inter alia*, the expansion of a number of social care services such as home care, day care, transportation and personal assistance; new and innovative video and audio care services and alarm buttons; as well as social counselling services for families provided by social workers, legal experts and psychologists. The Government estimates that, to date, it has reached 10,500 persons with disabilities, older persons and their families through such services.

⁸ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the United States of America define ageing in place as the ability to live in one’s own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income or ability level. See www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/terminology.htm.

⁹ ECE, “Innovative and empowering strategies for care”, Policy Brief on Ageing, No. 15 (Geneva, ECE, February 2015).

¹⁰ See the reply by the Government of the United Kingdom to the questionnaire of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons. Available from www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/OlderPersons/IE/Pages/MIPAA.aspx.

26. The Government of Estonia indicated that it planned to establish a high-level committee to map the most important care-related problems and to propose solutions, including financing schemes. In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs is preparing needs-based assessment methodologies to better integrate social and health-care services in order to offer the best possible assistance, to prevent the worsening of problems and to reduce the use of institutional care.¹¹

27. ESCAP reports that the Government of China, as an objective of its Twelfth Five-Year Plan on Ageing (2011-2015), which prioritizes the development of long-term care and rehabilitation services, is building an in-home care model that integrates medical and social services. The Government of Thailand is also currently implementing a pilot project to develop community-based long-term care, which it aims to expand.

28. In Australia, changes were planned in 2015 to ensure that older persons in need of care have real opportunities to make informed decisions and are supported in their choices. Through the "My Aged Care" online information system, older people and their families can access comprehensive information on the system of aged care services and how to obtain such services. It includes information on all Government-funded aged care services and fee estimators that growing numbers of clients are using to compare services and make decisions.

Regulation of care services and institutions

29. Although the practice is already widespread in developed countries, there has been a noticeable move by some low- and middle-income countries to legislate and provide guidelines for the provision of care services at home and in institutions. The Government of Kyrgyzstan has set minimum standards for social services in residential facilities run by the State. The Government also adopted a decision, which sets out standards for the provision of social services to older persons in day care and social welfare establishments. The Government of Bahrain published a procedural manual for nursing homes in 2014 that included administrative procedures and guidance on services and job descriptions. In Australia, the User Rights Principles (2014) and the Charter of Care Recipients' Rights and Responsibilities (Home Care) are being updated to reflect the rights and responsibilities of consumers and the responsibilities of care providers with respect to consumer-directed care.

30. Although institutional care for older persons in sub-Saharan Africa is not widespread, some Governments have recognized that, while the role of the family as the provider of such care is still the norm, there is now a need to regulate those care institutions that exist to care for older persons who are neglected or homeless. The Government of Kenya noted that a number of care homes had been established informally by charities.¹² In the case of Zambia, guidelines for care homes operated by the Government are being prepared.¹³ ECA notes that the pace of population

¹¹ See the reply by the Government of Estonia to the questionnaire of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons.

¹² Isabella Aboderin and others, "Human rights and residential care for older adults in sub-Saharan Africa: case study of Kenya", in *Towards Human Rights in Residential Care for Older Persons: international perspectives* (London, Routledge, 2016).

¹³ See the reply by the Government of Zambia to the questionnaire of the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons.

ageing, combined with the impact of social and economic factors on society, means that family support will no longer be the sole viable means of social security for older persons. This points towards the need for further regulation of care services in sub-Saharan Africa.

C. Health care

Advancing health and well-being into old age

31. Dementia currently affects 47 million people worldwide; that figure is likely to double by 2030 and triple by 2050.¹⁴ As was evident during the second review and appraisal exercise, the growing number of older persons suffering from Alzheimer's disease and dementia has slowly led to the development of more action plans, policies and strategies, albeit mostly in developed countries. As noted by ECE, national strategic plans are still relatively new in the region. In addition, as pointed out by Alzheimer's Disease International, a recent study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development concluded that, even in developed countries, "dementia receives the worst care" with an over-reliance on informal family care.¹⁵

32. Since the second review, a comprehensive dementia plan has been launched in Norway that focuses, inter alia, on the development of research, data and planning, appropriate care and services, improvement in the sharing and dissemination of information and the establishment of partnerships with families and local communities. Malta has a plan for the period 2015-2023, and the plan of Costa Rica (one of the few developing countries to have formulated a plan) covers the period 2014-2024. Austria is currently in the process of drafting a strategy for dementia, following the completion of its national report on dementia in 2014; Slovenia is engaged in similar action. Italy and Switzerland both have launched relevant strategies.

33. Since only around half of those affected by Alzheimer's disease in high-income countries, and 1 in 10 or fewer of those in low- and middle-income countries, have received a diagnosis, some countries, in particular middle-income and developing countries, are at the initial stages of programme development in this area. For example, the Ministry of Social Affairs of Estonia is elaborating a concept paper on the development of affordable and quality services for people with dementia and the development of telecare services by the end of 2019. Lebanon issued an awareness-raising information kit on Alzheimer's disease in 2012, but in a majority of developing countries, most of the awareness-raising activities and informal training for family caregivers that does exist is carried out solely by civil society.

Maintenance of capacity throughout the life course

34. The Economic Commission for Europe notes that the concept of active ageing is based on the promotion of good health, participation and security. The Active

¹⁴ WHO and Alzheimer's Disease International, *Dementia: a public health priority* (Geneva, 2012).

¹⁵ OECD, "Addressing dementia: the OECD Response", OECD Health Policy Studies (Paris, OECD Publishing, 2015).

Ageing Index was used by member States during the second review process to monitor progress in the implementation of the Commission's Regional Strategy on Ageing. Since then, many Governments have increasingly turned their attention to the development of similar frameworks, policies and programmes that support the maintenance of the functional capacity as people age in order to reduce dependency and to support empowerment and economic, social and political participation. For example, Estonia adopted an active ageing development plan for the period 2013-2020 on strategies for an age-inclusive society. More recently, the Government of Singapore adopted an action plan for successful ageing in 2016 which covers, inter alia, the areas of care, employment, lifelong learning, health, social engagement and volunteering.

35. The approach is also visible in the reorientation of a number of government health services to focus on the rehabilitation of older persons in order to maintain and restore functional ability and independent living as much as possible. For example, in Ontario, Canada, a pilot project called "Assess and Restore" was launched, with the aim of helping older persons to recover from illness and injury so that they could continue to live at home. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in Ontario included the project in its strategy for the period 2013-14, with 69 funded pilot projects that focused on restoring the functional skills and abilities of frail older persons. Those projects were aimed at providing care and rehabilitation services in the community through day clinics, outpatient services and in-home rehabilitative services, thereby keeping older persons out of hospitals. The project also developed tools to help identify older persons at risk, thereby preventing or delaying loss of function.

36. For some countries, in particular those with "young" demographic profiles, the recognition that the health care of older persons is a priority is a marker of progress in the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. For example, in 2014, Kuwait established a department for health services to older persons within the Ministry of Health.

D. Human rights

37. The aim of the Madrid Plan of Action is to ensure that people everywhere are able to age with security and dignity and continue to participate in their societies as citizens with full rights. Since 2012, there has been growing attention to and discussion of the human rights of older persons. Several Member States have pursued a variety of legislative, policy and programmatic approaches to address the protection of the rights of older persons as called for in the Plan of Action. For example, in Argentina, the Government has adopted a human rights-based approach for all plans, policies, programmes and projects. Mexico, since reforming its constitution in 2011, has strengthened its regulatory, policy and institutional frameworks to recognize and realize the human rights of older persons in line with those of other population groups. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ministry of Human Rights and Refugees is planning to establish a reporting system that reflects the principles of the Plan of Action that is aimed at more coherently monitoring the rights of older persons. In Czechia, securing and protecting the human rights of older persons is one of the strategic areas of the National Action Plan for Positive Ageing for the period 2013-2017.

38. Since the second review and appraisal, there have been notable regional developments with regard to strengthening the promotion and protection of the human rights of older persons, namely, the adoption of two legally binding instruments: the Inter-American Convention on Protecting the Human Rights of Older Persons, by the Organization of American States in June 2015, and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Older Persons in Africa, by the African Union in January 2016.

39. Employers, along with health-care, financial and insurance providers in many parts of the world continue to discriminate against older persons, with older women often experiencing multiple forms of discrimination resulting from their gender-based roles in society. Several Member States have taken measures to combat age discrimination and address issues related to the inclusion of older persons in society. For example, Malta recently adopted policy initiatives to promote awareness of ageism and age discrimination and to expand legal definitions to reflect both the direct and indirect nature of age discrimination and the fact that it can manifest as victimization and harassment and that supporting age discrimination is also an unlawful act. The country also launched a participatory awareness-raising campaign on equality and discrimination issues that was linked to Madrid Plan of Action recommendations, including encouraging older persons to express their views on the effects of discrimination.

40. The Government of Georgia adopted an anti-discrimination law in 2014, which clearly states, *inter alia*, that it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of age. Recognizing that its Equal Treatment Act was applicable only to employment and vocational education, the Ministry of Social Affairs of Estonia initiated amendments to the Act in 2016 that were aimed at expanding the principle of equal treatment to social welfare, health services and social security benefits, as well as to public goods and services, including housing. In 2015, the Government of Australia requested the country's Human Rights Commission to conduct an inquiry into practices, attitudes and laws that affect the equal participation of older persons and those with disabilities in employment. Also in 2015, the Government appointed the then Age Discrimination Commissioner, Susan Ryan, as the first-ever Ambassador for Mature Age Employment to help develop greater awareness among employers of the business benefits of hiring older workers and to help open new doors for job seekers. Mexico, as part of its 2012 labour law reforms, included provisions protecting the right of older adults to decent work under conditions of equality and non-discrimination. In Ecuador, the National Council for Intergenerational Equality recently drafted proposals for public policies relating to older persons with the aim of reducing income inequality gaps. The Government of Malta is currently pursuing policies to address the specific concerns of older lesbian women and gay men and the human rights implications of their sexual identities on citizenship later in life.

41. The second review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action showed that neglect, abuse and violence against older persons had become a concern for Member States in all regions, regardless of their level of development (see A/68/167). Older women face greater risk of physical and psychological abuse owing to discriminatory societal attitudes and the non-realization of women's human rights. Since 2012, a growing number of Governments have acknowledged that elder abuse is a highly prevalent, often hidden and complex reality, and several Member States have made significant efforts to combat it. For example, the Government of Malta

increased recognition of elder abuse and neglect through research, public education and the training of persons working in the social and health-care sectors, including police officers. It also developed a strategy to empower older adults to report abuse. In addition, Malta put in place legal amendments to protect older persons from abuse and neglect, introduced harsher penalties for crimes, incorporated new forms of deterrents into the Criminal Code and worked to develop an adult protection act for vulnerable and older persons. In many countries, such as Lebanon and Nicaragua, the abuse of older persons continues to fall under domestic violence legislation. In 2014, Lebanon adopted legislation that penalizes domestic family violence, including against older persons. However, that protection only covers abuse committed within the home. A recent report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons and the Second World Assembly on Ageing noted recent findings drawing specific attention to the abuse and violence directed at older women accused of witchcraft (see A/70/185). Since the second review and appraisal cycle, Burkina Faso has implemented a National Plan of Action for the period 2012-2016 against the social exclusion of persons accused of witchcraft, with specific attention to older women.

42. Access to justice for older persons was among the main themes discussed at the third working session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, held in New York from 21 to 24 August 2012, where particular attention was given to promoting knowledge and awareness among older persons of the full range of their rights, to their having reasonable pathways to exercise those rights and to their having reasonable legal resources and self-help avenues of redress to remedy and prevent the loss of those rights (see A/AC.278/2012/1). In Costa Rica, in July 2016, the National Council of Older Persons, in partnership with the University of Costa Rica, established a legal office to guide older persons requiring legal advice, legal representation in judicial and administrative procedures and extrajudicial legal counselling.

E. Disaster and other emergency situations and participation of civil society in policy governance

43. Some countries are devoting increasing attention to addressing the distinct needs and concerns of older persons in disasters and other emergency situations. The issue of older persons in disaster and emergency contexts has been emphasized by ECLAC and ESCWA. For instance, in Chile, the National Service for Older Persons convened a round table on addressing emergencies in long-term care institutions for national entities with jurisdiction in such situations. The first output of the round table was a guide on long-term care establishments for older persons in the context of regional emergency plans that was directed at the regional offices of the National Service and at administrators, staff and residents of long-term care establishments to guide them in developing their own action plans for emergency and/or disaster preparedness that, while based on government-issued methodologies on civil protection, also reflect regional and local needs.

44. The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia is conducting substantive research on older persons and conflict and related emergency situations and has identified the need to develop age-responsive emergency preparedness and

relief plans and programmes as a priority for older persons in the region. Western Asia has been experiencing social movements, violent conflicts and political instability that have resulted in humanitarian crises and a growing number of refugees.¹⁶ The adverse effects of conflict on the rights and well-being of older persons have been exacerbated by their specific needs. For instance, a large majority of older Syrian refugees in Lebanon, who describe their overall health as poor, cannot afford needed medication, with most also fully dependent on humanitarian assistance for their needs. At the same time, the potential of older persons to make important contributions to emergency response is often overlooked. Such contributions should be supported.

45. Within the Asia-Pacific region, the Government of Viet Nam endorsed a plan to expand the model of intergenerational self-help clubs nationwide, with Government funds allocated to finance club activities. Those self-help clubs play an important role in local development by supporting disaster response, building livelihood security, improving health care and promoting participation in community life and in governance.¹⁷

46. With regard to the participation of older persons, ECE has observed growing involvement by civil society, especially that of organizations of older persons, in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies addressing the rights, needs and fulfilment of the potential of older persons. Despite uneven progress on the issue across regions and countries, many countries in that region have boards and groups for older persons with consultative status at the national, regional or local policymaking levels. In Eastern Europe, in particular, there has been more active civil society engagement on ageing issues.

IV. Recommendations

47. The Commission for Social Development, at its fifty-sixth session, in 2018, will conduct the global segment of the third review and appraisal cycle of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002. In the first two cycles, the review was carried out in the form of plenary panels with representatives of each regional group of Member States complementing the findings and outcomes of the regional review and appraisal processes conducted by the regional commissions.

48. In the lead-up to the third review and appraisal, the regional commissions suggested a number of substantive and organizational ideas to more fully highlight the outcomes of the regional processes, including the following:

(a) Holding round tables, in parallel, to focus on key topics within the three priority directions of the Madrid Plan of Action and prepare recommendations to guide work in those areas;

¹⁶ Rouba Arja, "Responding to ageing in crisis situations: live experience from Arab countries", *Gerontechnology*, vol. 12, No 4 (2014), pp. 214-218.

¹⁷ HelpAge International, "Government of Viet Nam officially endorsed plan to expand intergenerational self-help club model nationwide". Available from www.ageingasia.org.

(b) Focusing on building complementarities and synergies, as well as bridging gaps between the Madrid Plan of Action and the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular in terms of frameworks and reporting;

(c) Debating and agreeing upon a global road map or strategy on ageing for the next five years;

(d) Organizing two panel events, with the first panel comprised of Member States representing each region, to highlight regional perspectives, and the second featuring a keynote speaker, to be followed by a panel of global experts;

(e) Ending the session with the adoption of a resolution on the critical importance of ageing issues and the Madrid Plan of Action and with a focus on a few key follow-up actions.

49. Member States may wish to take the recommendations into consideration in elaborating the programme of work for the fifty-sixth session of the Commission.

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**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and
the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly**

**Emerging issues: promoting integrated policies for poverty
eradication: youth development in the 2030 Agenda for
Sustainable Development**

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/18, the programme of work of the Commission for Social Development has included the agenda item "Emerging issues" since its 2007-2008 review and policy cycle. Under this agenda item, the Commission addresses current issues affecting social development that require urgent consideration and new cross-cutting issues in the context of evolving global development challenges. In selecting the theme in recent years, the Bureau of the Commission has also taken into full consideration the annual themes of the Economic and Social Council in order to better align the work of the Commission with that of the Council, as called for in General Assembly resolution 68/1. At its fifty-fifth session, the Commission will consider under that agenda item the question of "Promoting integrated policies for poverty eradication: youth development in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". The present note has been prepared to provide background information for the discussion of the topic.

2. The present note focuses on some specific areas that are important for promoting integrated policies for poverty eradication in the context of youth development in the 2030 Agenda, in which the Commission could play a leading role. It also explores how the Commission could provide guidance on the effective implementation of youth policies and their links to the 2030 Agenda. It should be read in conjunction with the report of the Secretary-General on policies and

* E/CN.5/2017/1.



programmes involving youth (E/CN.5/2017/5) and a similar note, prepared for the fiftieth session of the Commission, on youth, poverty and unemployment (E/CN.5/2012/8).

3. Youth development is a key driver of sustainable development and poverty eradication around the world. Young people should acquire the education and skills needed to contribute to a productive economy, and they need access to a job market that can absorb them into the labour force. Among the greatest challenges facing many countries today are inadequate human capital investment and high unemployment rates among youth. Some countries are struggling to educate and employ their young people, while also anticipating substantial growth in the number of youth. Those countries will be doubly challenged in their efforts to assure universal high-quality education, productive employment and decent work for all.

4. Against that background, the Bureau of the Commission chose "Promoting integrated policies for poverty eradication: youth development in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" as the emerging issues topic of the Commission at its fifty-fifth session, which also echoes the theme of the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council for 2017. The selection of that topic acknowledges that the manner in which the 2030 Agenda is translated into national policies and strategies and implemented and monitored will play a key role in its success in terms of promoting inclusion and participation and in advancing a comprehensive vision of social development.

II. Poverty eradication through implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

5. At the United Nations summit held in September 2015, the General Assembly adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The 2030 Agenda is a universal, transformative and people-centred plan of action to collectively work towards achieving sustainable development for current and future generations, through the integration of its social, economic and environmental dimensions in a balanced manner.

6. The 2030 Agenda continues to place the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions at the centre of global development, while placing greater emphasis on an integrated approach to sustainable development and the pledge to leave no one behind. It provides a new context for the promotion of social development, namely as an integral component in the implementation of the commitments to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

7. Several priorities for youth development were specifically identified in the 2030 Agenda. This has increased the need for the development, implementation and monitoring of robust, innovative and progressive youth policies in order to achieve the Goals. Youth policies provide a framework for the implementation of the Goals and enable young people to fulfil their potential as active members of society.

8. The World Programme of Action for Youth, adopted by the General Assembly in 1995, provides a policy framework and practical guidelines for national action

and international support to improve the situation of young people around the world. The Programme of Action covers 15 youth priority areas and contains proposals for action in each of those areas, including through the development of national youth policies.

9. Since the adoption of the Programme of Action, Member States have developed, revised and implemented national youth strategies and policies. During the high-level event of the President of the General Assembly to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth, held on 29 May 2015, Member States highlighted their efforts in utilizing the Programme of Action in the development and realization of national youth policies, in particular those concerning youth employment. Those efforts reflect the commitments of Member States, including as indicated most recently in Assembly resolution 70/127, in which the Assembly reiterated:

The primary responsibility for implementing the World Programme of Action for Youth lies with Member States, and urges Governments, in consultation with youth and youth-led and youth-focused organizations and other relevant stakeholders, to develop holistic and integrated youth policies and programmes based on the Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to evaluate them regularly as part of the follow-up action on and implementation of the Programme of Action at all levels.

III. Poverty eradication through the development, implementation and monitoring of national youth policies

10. The effective development, implementation and monitoring of youth policies play a critical role in poverty eradication and in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, to date there has been limited implementation of national youth policies and, where youth policies do exist, they are often implemented in a vacuum, without consideration of other public policies, and lack appropriate financing.

11. To ensure their effective implementation, youth policies must be developed and implemented in conjunction with other public policies that affect the lives of youth and must be adequately financed. Doing so requires the development and implementation of cross-sectoral and integrated policy frameworks and the alignment of youth policies with regional and global development frameworks, in particular the 2030 Agenda and the Programme of Action. In addition, policies should be developed and implemented based on sound empirical evidence and rigorous scientific analysis and should involve young people in their development, implementation and monitoring, where feasible.

A. Evidence-based youth policymaking

12. Evidence-based youth policymaking ensures that youth policies are developed in a robust and effective manner through the use of quantitative and qualitative statistics and data, scientific knowledge and practical knowledge. Such evidence helps deepen the understanding of the current status of young people and translates

data, experience and knowledge into appropriate and successful strategies and policies for young people. At the fifty-first session of the Commission, the Secretary-General proposed a set of indicators related to the Programme of Action. The indicators, which were developed at the request of Member States, provide a tool to better assess the situation of youth and thereby contribute to more effective youth policymaking.

B. Youth participation in policy and decision-making

13. Ensuring the participation of young people in the design, development, implementation and monitoring of youth policies is central to ensuring their effectiveness. From open consultations, youth advisory boards and youth-led processes and partnerships, a range of methods to involve young people in youth policymaking exist among Member States. In particular, efforts to promote the participation of girls, young women and marginalized youth have a positive impact on the effectiveness of youth policies.

IV. Role of youth policies in addressing poverty

14. As emphasized in the 2030 Agenda, efforts to end poverty should address not only income but also the structural causes of poverty. Structural causes of poverty include: a lack of or limited access to education, health care and other basic services; inadequate access to food, nutrition, energy, housing and safe environments; unequal access to land and other productive assets, credit, inheritance, information, knowledge and technologies; a lack of opportunities for decent work and participation; and social discrimination and exclusion.

15. Certain groups of young people are particularly vulnerable to poverty and deprivation, including girls and young women, youth with disabilities, indigenous youth, young migrants and rural youth. Youth policies should, therefore, include measures to carefully analyse and remove the structural barriers encountered by youth, in particular those faced by the most vulnerable and disadvantaged youth, so that they can escape the cycle of poverty.

16. With respect to poverty eradication and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, it is critical to (a) promote decent jobs for all; (b) ensure gender equality and the empowerment of girls and young women; and (c) promote the inclusion of the most marginalized youth through targeted youth policy measures.

A. Youth employment

17. Productive employment and decent work, if adequately remunerated, are effective pathways out of poverty and provide access to social protection, guarantee workplace rights and provide opportunities for social dialogue. Decent work also promotes social inclusion, dignity, participation, motivation and engagement and aids in the realization of sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth. For people living in poverty, decent jobs also enhance their health, nutrition and quality of life.

18. Young people are disproportionately affected by unemployment, underemployment, vulnerable employment and working poverty. Even during periods of robust economic growth, the labour market is often unable to assimilate large numbers of youth. In recent years, the situation has been exacerbated by the lingering effects of the global financial and economic crisis, with declining numbers of youth able to find decent work. Recent estimates indicate that 71 million youth, or close to 13 per cent of all young people worldwide, were unemployed in 2016.¹

19. Given the current rates of population growth, it is expected that 470 million jobs will need to be created globally to absorb the growing number of new entrants into the labour market between 2016 and 2030.² This is of particular concern for countries affected by the so-called "youth bulge". Evidence shows that having a large number of unemployed youth increases social tensions and threatens social cohesion.

20. Although joblessness is a concern in almost all countries, in low- and middle-income countries, a particular challenge is posed by the large numbers of youth who, working irregularly in the informal sector, cannot escape working poverty. This is particularly true for young women. It is estimated that, in 2013, 286 million employed youth were living on less than \$4 per day, and 169 million were subsisting on less than \$2 per day.³

21. The 2008 economic and financial crisis reinforced the long-term downward trend in youth labour market participation rates. Crisis-induced increases in youth unemployment would have been greater had many young workers not dropped out of the labour market. While some youth may have returned to the education system, the share of those who were neither in employment nor in education or training increased in 30 of the 40 countries for which data were available for 2007 and from 2011 to 2012.⁴ This severe waste of human potential can have drastic repercussions in terms of marginalization and exclusion both for the young people affected and for societies at large.⁵

22. Given the persistent exclusion of some children and youth from the education system, combined with global trends in youth unemployment and changes in labour markets owing to technological advancement, the provision of inclusive and equitable high-quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all is of great importance. Such education is essential for ensuring that youth obtain not only basic skills, but also livelihood skills to support their transition from school to work.⁵

23. The exclusion of youth from the labour market is of particular concern because of its long-term effect on well-being and its impact on social cohesion and stability. For every young person, a decent job is an important step in completing the

¹ International Labour Organization (ILO), *World Employment Social Outlook: Trends for Youth 2016* (International Labour Office, Geneva, 2016).

² United Nations Development Group, "Growth and employment in the post-2015 agenda".

³ ILO, "Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth", (International Labour Office, Geneva, 2015).

⁴ ILO, *Global Employment Trends 2014: risk of a jobless recovery?* (International Labour Office, Geneva, 2014).

⁵ *Report on the World Social Situation 2016: leaving no one behind: the imperative of inclusive development* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IV.1).

transition to adulthood and a milestone towards achieving independence and self-reliance. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), given that more than 40 per cent of the world's active youth are either unemployed or working but living in poverty, the financial and economic crisis of 2008 has led to a "lost generation" of young people who have lost all hope of being able to work for a decent living. Not only do unemployment and underemployment affect young people's material, physical and mental well-being, they also hamper their future economic opportunities. Research shows that joblessness among youth is associated with lower wages and lower labour market participation later in life. Joblessness also leaves its mark in the form of young people's distrust in political, social and economic systems. Indeed, protests and other expressions of social unrest have been particularly acute in countries and regions where youth unemployment is widespread or has been rising rapidly over the past decade.⁵

24. Supporting the economic participation of educated and skilled young people can be a driving force for sustained and inclusive economic growth and political stability. With more than 87 per cent of the world's youth living in developing countries, efforts to address employment challenges must not only generate more job opportunities for young people, but also improve the quality of work and working conditions. Engaging young people in productive activities and addressing their needs and concerns are therefore critical to achieving sustained and inclusive growth and enhancing social stability. The links between youth employment, skills development, green jobs and social protection as part of the transition to a greener economy should be examined further.

25. To address the persistent youth unemployment and underemployment challenge, a number of Member States have developed targeted youth employment policies and strategies aimed at promoting job creation and strengthening youth skills development and training. In many cases, actions aimed at combating youth unemployment and underemployment constitute a central element of national youth policies, strategies and plans.

26. Policies aimed at tackling the structural causes of the lack of employment opportunities for young people have often focused on increasing their employability by improving their access to and the quality of formal education, apprenticeships and other vocational programmes and by reducing the mismatch between the skills acquired and those needed in the labour market. Some countries have also focused on promoting youth entrepreneurship by providing youth with financial literacy training, credit and microfinancing.

27. Such policy measures have been most effective when integrated into policy frameworks that promote employment more broadly. However, such policies often fail to specifically target more vulnerable and marginalized youth, including youth living in poverty and those at risk of exclusion, including indigenous youth, youth with disabilities and rural youth.

28. The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth, launched under ILO leadership, is a joint effort of 19 United Nations entities that brings together Governments, social partners, parliamentarians, the private sector, youth representatives and civil society in an effort to increase the impact of evidence-based interventions, knowledge partnerships and multi-stakeholder partnerships at the country level. Such joint efforts are necessary in order to maximize the

effectiveness of investments in youth employment and will contribute to the implementation of the youth employment-related Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

B. Gender inequality and the empowerment of girls and young women

29. Girls and young women are more likely than young men to experience barriers to their full and effective participation in society, for example, in gaining access to quality education, employment and health care. Young women are also likely to be excluded from decision-making and experience low levels of participation in public life. Such exclusion increases a young woman's likelihood of experiencing and remaining in poverty.

30. Combating negative gender stereotypes, systemic barriers and societal behaviours are critical aspects of developing the conditions for the participation of young women and the advancement of gender equality. In accordance with the Programme of Action, involving both young women and young men in policy development can ensure that the resulting policies advance gender equality and are better positioned to alter the attitudes and behaviours that can hinder the advancement of girls and young women.

31. Measures to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment can be meaningfully implemented when adequate funding is put in place, including through the apportionment of dedicated budgets to implement gender-specific policies and the allocation of gender-responsive budgets to finance non-gender-specific policies.

C. Marginalized youth

32. Marginalization can affect the ability of young people to meaningfully participate in the social, economic, cultural and political spheres of society and in decision-making that affects them, and can greatly affect their life-long propensity to experience poverty. In particular, indigenous youth, youth in rural areas, youth with disabilities and young migrants, may be at greater risk of poverty, marginalization and social exclusion.

33. Integrated youth policies that attend to the needs of marginalized youth and address the societal conditions that lead to vulnerability, poverty and social exclusion, can help ensure the visibility of marginalized youth, reduce inequalities and supply the tools and skills required for them to have a positive impact in their own lives and their communities. Policies established to support young people, in particular the poor and the marginalized, are necessary in order to remove the additional systemic and institutional obstacles that limit their contributions and to ensure that their full potential is realized.

34. The participation of youth from marginalized groups as stakeholders in youth policymaking and participatory processes helps to ensure the effectiveness of policy development and poverty eradication.

35. The comprehensive social inclusion of marginalized young people in a given country requires concerted, holistic and cross-sectoral approaches in policy areas related to women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, refugees, migrants, youth in rural areas and the economically impoverished, on the part of the ministries responsible for youth, employment, food and agriculture, housing, social affairs, public health, environment, law, transportation and social welfare.

V. Youth engagement for development through information and communications technologies

36. The reach of young people's online presence and activity is both broad and extensive. Young people around the world use new information and communications technologies and mobile devices to stay connected and become informed about issues that affect them, helping them to engage and participate in a variety of ways. In addition, young people are at the forefront in devising technological solutions to some of today's most pressing poverty-related challenges, such as gaining access to health care, education and financial literacy.

37. The ability of youth to develop and utilize online tools and forums to create spaces and respond to the needs of local and global communities has allowed them to engage in a multitude of ways and on a variety of topics at any given time. In order to leverage the innovation of young people in the quest to eradicate poverty, it is important that policymakers utilize and harness the power of information and communications technologies to better develop and implement youth policies.

38. Although many youth throughout the world are connected to the Internet, there are still many who do not have adequate access to broadband, open access to the Internet or the mobile tools and devices needed to participate. The Broadband Commission for Digital Development notes that, while 3.2 billion people (43 per cent of the global population) were connected in 2015, only 35 per cent of people in developing countries had such access. Moreover, 90 per cent of people in the least developed countries did not have access to any kind of Internet connection. Ensuring the active inclusion and involvement of unconnected youth as the connected world forges ahead remains an important challenge.⁶

VI. Role of the Commission for Social Development

39. The Commission for Social Development, a body responsible for advising the Economic and Social Council on all issues related to social policies and social development, including on the follow-up to and implementation of the Programme of Action, has an important role to play in assisting Member States in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals as they pertain to youth and the development, implementation and monitoring of youth policies.

⁶ The Broadband Commission for Digital Development, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The State of Broadband Report 2015 (Geneva, 2015).

40. To implement the 2030 Agenda and the Goals, Governments will need to: (a) translate them into an integrated national policy framework; (b) formulate national plans, strategies and programmes based on the national policy framework; (c) identify and secure financial and technical resources; (d) to establish mechanisms for monitoring, reviewing and reporting progress; and (e) identify and build effective partnerships.

41. The Commission should continue to serve as a forum for sharing experiences in promoting people-centred and inclusive youth policy development and follow-up in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

VII. Conclusion

42. A comprehensive approach to youth policy often includes targeted efforts, as well as cross-sectoral efforts, continuous youth engagement, evidence-based approaches and links to regional and global processes and priorities. Addressing the issues and challenges faced by young people in all sectors should include a focus on gender equality, youth participation and the inclusion of marginalized groups. Such approaches to policymaking contribute to the robustness of the resulting policies and their implementation and address inequalities faced by marginalized groups.

43. To discuss and elaborate on the suggestions contained in the present note, the Commission may wish to focus on the following questions in its deliberations on emerging issues at its fifty-fifth session:

(a) What is the current state of youth development and youth policies at the global regional and national levels in the areas highlighted by the 2030 Agenda and the Programme of Action?

(b) How can youth development be used to achieve poverty eradication? What are some innovative approaches and strategies, good practices and lessons learned at the national, regional and international levels? How can these be used to address the needs of the most marginalized youth and ensure that no one is left behind?

(c) What concrete recommendations can the Commission put forth to promote sustainable youth development and successful youth policies, including evidence-informed policies, and the inclusion of youth in the policy process and in youth mainstreaming?

(d) What role do alliances and partnerships play in such initiatives?

(e) How does youth development, as a driver of poverty eradication, contribute to progress with respect to the social dimensions of sustainable development?

(f) How can information and communications technologies and new technologies be harnessed in the implementation of the Goals, in particular by and for youth, as a means of enhancing youth development outcomes?



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**Programme questions and other matters: United Nations
Research Institute for Social Development**

Report of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Commission for Social Development at its fifty-fifth session the report of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development on the work of the Institute during 2015 and 2016.

* E/CN.5/2016/L.1.



Report of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development on the work of the Institute during 2015 and 2016

Summary

The present report covers the activities of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development in 2015 and 2016. It highlights the programmatic achievements during this period, and presents the institutional and financial situation.

The biennium was marked by opportunities and transitions for the Institute: the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which presented the Institute with important opportunities to demonstrate the relevance of its research; the appointment of a new director; and the initiation of work within a new strategic framework. Transformations to Equity and Sustainability: UNRISD Strategy 2016-2020 links research, communications, policy engagement, results and impact, and was developed through extensive consultations with actual and potential users of research of the Institute in the United Nations system, Member States, civil society and academia.

The biennium also brought significant challenges: a changed funding context for research and the need for reforms to strengthen the Institute's oversight and governance.

In this period of change, the Institute continued to carry out and to convene research under its three thematic areas of expertise: social policy and development; gender and development; and social dimensions of sustainable development. It published Policy Innovations for Transformative Change: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, its 2016 flagship report, as a contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In those ways the work of the Institute addressed system-wide development priorities related to poverty reduction, inequality, social protection, the empowerment of women and social drivers of sustainability.

The Institute's research contributed directly to the work of the Commission for Social Development and the Economic and Social Council on the above themes. Research findings of the Institute were also widely used by United Nations agencies, Member States, civil society and academia. Researchers regularly advise or provide briefings or presentations to these stakeholders, sharing knowledge, framing debates and influencing thinking and policy alternatives on development issues.

During the reporting period, the Institute continued to innovate its communications and outreach activities, and to strengthen institutional processes related to results-based management and impact.

At the beginning of 2016, the Institute's financial position reached a crisis point, with financial reserves depleted and operations threatened. As a result of discussions and negotiation with Institute's principal Government partners and the United Nations system, emergency funds were mobilized to stabilize the Institute. Considerable efforts will be required in the near future to diversify core funding and increase project funding.

The Institute is funded entirely through voluntary contributions, and depends on the support of Member States to ensure the fulfilment of its core mandate and functions of support to the United Nations system and to Member States. The Institute is grateful to its funders, particularly those providing institutional support — Finland, Sweden and Switzerland — without which none of the Institute's activities could take place.

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I. Introduction: transitions, opportunities and challenges

1. The present report covers the activities of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development in 2015 and 2016. It is submitted to the Commission for Social Development in accordance with the terms set out in Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/126 of 1 August 1963, in which it is stipulated that the Board of the Institute should, *inter alia*, submit regularly to the Commission "a progress report on the work of the Institute".

2. The Institute was established in 1963 as an autonomous space within the United Nations system with the mandate to undertake policy-relevant research on the social dimensions of development. For more than five decades the Institute has been at the forefront of efforts to ensure that social issues remain prominent within the development activities of the United Nations. The Institute is the only institution in the United Nations system that is dedicated to research on social issues that are often neglected in development policy and practice.

3. The Institute uses its global convening power as a United Nations organization with a reputation for research excellence to leverage an international network of academics, policymakers and practitioners, thus bringing a diverse knowledge base and plurality of ideas to inform the work of the United Nations system on social issues.

4. The biennium was marked by opportunities and transitions for the Institute: the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which presents important opportunities to demonstrate the relevance of Institute research; the appointment of a new director; and the initiation of work under a new institutional strategy. The biennium also brought significant challenges: a changed funding context for research and the need for reforms to strengthen the Institute's oversight and governance.

5. The strategic framework for 2016-2020, which links research, communications, policy engagement, results and impact, was developed through extensive consultations with actual and potential users of research of the Institute and approved by the Institute's Board. A work plan is prepared annually, taking into consideration priority concerns and themes of the United Nations system, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development.

6. During the biennium, the Institute produced its fifth flagship report, *Policy Innovations for Transformative Change: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*,¹ which is a contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

7. The Institute is funded entirely through voluntary contributions and its work is governed by an independent Board. These conditions provide it with the autonomy needed to produce high-quality independent research. However, the funding context for the Institute has shifted significantly in recent years, as many donors have moved away from voluntary institutional funding. At the beginning of 2016, the Institute's financial position reached a crisis point, with reserves depleted and operations threatened.

¹ Available at www.unrisd.org/flagship2016.

8. As a result of discussions and negotiation with principal Government partners and the United Nations system, emergency funds were mobilized to stabilize the Institute. Considerable efforts will be needed in the near future to diversify core funding and increase the proportion of funding coming from projects. The Institute depends on the financial support of Member States to ensure delivery of its core mandate and functions of support to the United Nations system and Member States.

II. Strategic framework

9. The Institute began the implementation of work under Transformations to equity and sustainability: UNRISD strategy 2016-2020² during the biennium.

10. The strategy sets out the priorities and the themes of research of the Institute within an institutional framework that links research, communications, policy engagement, results and impact. It was developed through extensive consultations with actual and potential users of research of the Institute in the United Nations system, Member States, civil society and academia. It responds to contemporary development trends, policy concerns and scholarly debates, and aims to fill identified knowledge gaps, while also anticipating social issues that are not yet part of mainstream discourse.

11. Under the strategy, the Institute is carrying out research that will help national Governments and others achieve their sustainable development objectives. An overarching goal of the Institute is to ensure that social development concerns and objectives remain prominent in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

12. Research is organized in three programme areas: social policy and development, gender and development and social dimensions of sustainable development. Each programme identifies key questions and topics for research that will contribute to addressing the contemporary challenges of inequalities, conflict and unsustainable practices. In so doing, they aim to contribute evidence that supports efforts at local, national, regional and global levels to progress along sustainable and equitable development pathways.

13. Work within each programme is realized as a collaborative endeavour with global networks of researchers, policymakers and civil society actors that the Institute has built up over decades.

14. The strategic framework also includes information on research approach, methods and data, and a results framework with objectives, activities and outputs. The budgetary and financial requirements for implementing the strategy are discussed, as is the fact that the Institute receives no funding from the general budget of the United Nations and must fully mobilize all the financial resources necessary to implement the strategy.

² www.unrisd.org/unrisd-strategy-2016-2020.

III. 2016 flagship report

15. Twenty years after the World Summit for Social Development, and as countries begin to translate the vision of the 2030 Agenda into national strategies, development actors need concrete evidence of which policies and actions contribute to greater equity, inclusion and sustainability. The Institute's 2016 flagship report, *Policy Innovations for Transformative Change: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, explores what it will take to fulfil the 2030 Agenda vision of "transforming our world" and eradicating poverty in all its forms everywhere.

16. The report argues that social and ecological justice needs to be prioritized in policy and practice, and that the economy be made to work for people and the planet. That is founded on a wide range of case studies that show that integrated and coherent policymaking with an "eco-social" focus can create more inclusive, equitable and sustainable societies.

17. Drawing on numerous policy innovations from countries around the world, the report proposes a definition of transformation that can be used as a benchmark for policymaking and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It brings together five years of research of the Institute across six areas — social policy, care policy, social and solidarity economy, eco-social policy, domestic resource mobilization and politics and governance — and explores what transformative change really means for societies and individuals. The report examines the evidence of what is working and why in specific contexts, considers challenges and how they can be overcome and identifies spaces of synergy and coherence among policies that are likely to contribute positively to multiple Sustainable Development Goals.

18. As a learning organization that aims to be inclusive of diverse perspectives and responsive to its constituents, the Institute held an innovative global online consultation prior to the publication of the report. The Institute received feedback from civil society, academia, national governments, United Nations partners and other international organizations located in 28 countries.

19. The report was previewed at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2016 and officially launched on 17 October in Geneva at a public event and an executive briefing hosted by the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva. The Institute welcomes opportunities to partner with Member States in the organization of presentations around the world.

IV. Research agenda: transformations to equity and sustainability

20. There was a significant change in the international development landscape in the biennium, with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development succeeding the Millennium Development Goals. The new global commitments contain ambitious promises of solidarity and transformation, combining a continued focus on the most disadvantaged people in low-income countries with universal goals of greater equity and sustainability — social, ecological and economic.

21. With the development community now clearly focused on social issues, determined to combat inequalities, and oriented towards more balanced and integrated approaches to tackle development problems, there is a context of

opportunity for the Institute. The Institute's mission is to carry out research and policy analysis to ensure that social equity, inclusion and justice are central to development thinking, policy and practice.

22. In carrying out its work programme, the Institute pursued substantive collaboration with research networks in the Global South, engaging with researchers and institutions in ways that contributed to capacity-building: by convening interdisciplinary networks and engaging in two-way dialogue with partners to design, implement and deliver research projects, ensuring genuine co-production of knowledge and mutual learning.

A. Social policy and development

23. The social policy and development programme comprised projects of immediate relevance to the current policy context: the universalization of social security in emerging economies; innovations in the field of social policy in countries of the Global South; the politics and the processes that shape domestic resource mobilization and fiscal space for social development; the linkages between social protection and human rights; and the challenges of overcoming migrant precarity and of grounding migration governance in a rights-based approach.

24. Social policy of the Institute was the basis for regular engagement with policymakers, and for training and capacity strengthening activities. In 2015 and 2016, the Institute contributed to the course "Social policy for development planners", hosted by the United Nations African Institute for Economic Development and Planning, for mid- and senior-level civil servants from government ministries across Africa. Seminars were also given to activists and trade unionists from Latin America working for national social protection floors in their countries.

1. Politics of domestic resource mobilization for social development

25. Expanding (and maintaining) social policies requires resources. In a constrained fiscal environment, what are the possibilities for ensuring that revenues can be raised and allocated to social expenditures? That is a critical question in the context of discussions on financing for development and the 2030 Agenda. With funding from Sweden since 2012, the project studies the political and institutional factors that determine how domestic resources can be mobilized in low- and lower middle-income countries, what determines whether these are allocated in ways that advance social development and how national processes can be supported at regional and global levels.

26. Research by country teams in Bolivia, Nicaragua, Uganda and Zimbabwe explores the connections between the politics of resource mobilization and demands for social provision. It examines processes of negotiation about who pays and who benefits, as well as governance and institutional reforms that can lead to sustainable revenue yields and better service provision. Cross-country and cross-regional studies complement the four in-depth case studies; other papers examine different financing instruments and types of resources, such as taxes, aid and mineral rents.

27. The project aims to contribute to global debates about how to bridge the funding gaps for meeting key global development targets and social programmes;

enhance national ownership and policy space; and enhance effective accountability of Governments to citizens.

28. The research highlights some promising routes towards mobilizing more and better social development finance, and suggests a range of key issues to be addressed to support the 2030 Agenda. It emphasizes the importance of inclusive and transparent reform processes, diversification of the financing mix with an emphasis on instruments that promote sustainable development and equity and governance reforms at all levels.

29. A wide range of project outputs were produced during the biennium and are available on the website of the Institute, including country case studies and thematic papers, videos and project briefs.

30. The research has informed global debates on financing for development and, in particular, financing social protection floors. It has been used by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth, and the United Kingdom Department for International Development country offices in Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

31. Research from a related project, Mobilizing revenue from extractive industries: protecting and promoting children's rights and well-being in resource-rich countries, carried out in Mongolia, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea, in collaboration with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) East Asia and Pacific Regional Office, was finalized during the biennium. It has informed the programmatic and operational work of UNICEF, and contributed to the annual meetings of the Intergovernmental Forum on Mining, Metals and Sustainable Development and to Mongolia's national mainstreaming and planning efforts.

2. New directions in social policy: alternatives from and for the global South

32. The project, which began in 2014 with funding from Sweden, examines the emergence, the nature and the effectiveness of recent innovations in social policy in the Global South.

33. The research explores how economic, social, political and institutional arrangements can be designed to achieve better social outcomes; how the values and norms of human rights, equity, sustainability and social justice can be operationalized through "new" social policies; and how experiences, knowledge and learning about innovative approaches can be shared among countries in the Global South. The evidence and the analysis generated by the project will help improve understanding of alternative policies for social development in the context of the 2030 Agenda and beyond.

34. Country case studies are being carried out with teams of local and international researchers in China, India, Indonesia, Russia and South Africa; Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Oman and Tunisia are being studied by two teams; and country overviews are being prepared on Brazil and Rwanda. Thematic papers on institutional issues, informal employment and transnational and global approaches to social policy complete the commissioned research.

35. The project expands research carried out on the theme "Towards universal social security in emerging economies" (2012-2015, with funding from Brazil) that

examined recent reforms in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Brazil, China, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, the Russian Federation, South Africa and Thailand. The project explored the diverse pathways to extending programmes for income and health security, with the goal of understanding the political, the social, the economic and the institutional arrangements that enhance availability, affordability and accessibility. The project was concluded during the current biennium. The full set of working papers is available at www.unrisd.org, and the final volume will be published in January 2017.

36. This body of research has informed Institute contributions to the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia High-level Workshop on the Future of Development Policy in the Arab Region; the thirteenth Meeting of the Ministers of Labour and Social Affairs of the Community of Portuguese Language Countries and the Ministry of Social Solidarity (Timor Leste); and several Expert Group meetings of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat. The research was also presented to experts and civil society leaders from North African countries at the World Social Forum (Tunisia).

3. Linking social protection and human rights

37. This activity, initiated in 2013 by the Institute in collaboration with the former Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights and funded in 2015 and 2016 by Finland, aims to improve understanding of the human rights-based approach to social protection and provide resources that can support the development of capacities to implement rights-based social protection systems. It is a web-based platform (social-protection-humanrights.org) that provides policymakers and practitioners with a growing collection of resources: a framework of fundamental principles and relevant instruments, examples of jurisprudence, and a space for engagement around experiences, best practices and innovative solutions.

38. During the biennium eight new partners joined the Institute, the Social Protection Department of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in this activity: the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS and UNICEF.

39. The Institute organized eight events in Geneva and took part in numerous outside activities to raise awareness of the human rights-based approach and promote the platform. Side events were held in conjunction with six sessions of the Human Rights Council, and briefings were provided to social protection practitioners from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

4. Beyond “management of migration” to a human rights-based approach

40. As a “non-university partner” of a World Universities Network project on migrant precarity, the Institute was able to build on previous research on the themes “Social policy and migration in developing countries” and “Regional governance of migration”.

41. The project investigated the linkages between migration and social protection from a rights perspective in the context of intra-regional migration in Europe, the Americas and Asia, for three key groups of migrants (unaccompanied children, refugees and labour migrants). The research aimed to identify inclusive policies and institutions that reduce the precarity and strengthen the human rights of migrants in both sending and receiving countries.

42. The Institute's research, convening power and communications capacity positioned it as a valuable project partner. The Institute hosted the final project workshop to discuss research findings with representatives of international organizations, civil society organizations and academics, and produced a video, a policy brief and three working papers to communicate the research findings.

5. Future directions

43. Under the Institute strategy 2016-2020, and guided by the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the social policy and development programme will continue to examine questions of sustainable and progressive financing for development, and of innovative social policies in the Global South. It will pay particular attention to the politics of social policy change. It will also explore how social policy is being, or could be, harnessed at regional and global levels to deal with issues that cross borders, such as migration and environmental or conflict-induced displacement; and how social policy interfaces with economic and environmental policy to address complex intersections between policy domains.

44. In October 2016, the Institute was commissioned by the National Center for Social Studies (Saudi Arabia) to carry out a study on the theme "Lessons from successful experiences with welfare, rehabilitation and reintegration of prisoners". A new project, titled "Valueworks: effects of financialization along the copper value chain", was granted funding by the Swiss Network for International Studies and will commence in January 2017. This research on China, Switzerland and Zambia will have direct results for policy interventions relating to transparency in the commodity sector, transnational policy coherence and sustainable development.

45. At the end of the biennium, three project proposals were under consideration by donors: "Social policy for the integration of displaced persons in East Africa"; "Promoting the human security approach in livelihoods initiatives for refugee integration"; and "Global social governance and migrant precarity: the right to decent work". Further project ideas were under consultation with partners.

B. Gender and development

46. Gender inequality, discrimination and violence affect all countries around the world and are major obstacles to equitable, inclusive and sustainable development. Despite progress, the problems are pervasive and in many contexts reversals in previous gains are occurring. For these reasons, the gender and development programme focuses on the structures and the relations that underpin gendered outcomes, including the linkages between production and social reproduction, between economic and social policies and between women's movements and State institutions.

47. This work positions the Institute as a strong, innovative and recognized voice on gender and social development within (and beyond) the United Nations system. The relevance of the Institute's pioneering research on the care economy, for example, was demonstrated by the inclusion of unpaid care work in the Sustainable Development Goals.

48. Highlights of the biennium included collaboration with Oxfam to produce a special issue of the journal *Gender & Development* on the Sustainable Development Goals. A Think Piece series, "Let's talk about women's rights: 20 years after the Beijing Platform for Action", convened leading feminist thinkers from around the world to discuss achievements, challenges and ways forward on women's rights and gender equality. A workshop, "Substantive equality for women", organized with the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, aimed to strengthen the links between human rights and public policy to fully realize women's human rights and substantive gender equality. The Institute's expertise on unpaid care work was the basis for policy briefings at the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Inter-American Development Bank, and for Government ministers from Uruguay and Costa Rica.

1. Understanding gender-egalitarian policy change

49. Undertaken from 2013 to 2016 with support from the Ford Foundation, this project brought together international and national-level researchers to understand how policy change to strengthen women's rights occurs, and to identify the factors and the conditions under which non-State actors, particularly advocates of gender equality, can be effective in triggering and influencing policy change and effective implementation.

50. The project focused on violence against women, and domestic workers' labour rights, in China, India and Indonesia. It also considered women's land and inheritance rights, and unpaid care work.

51. With the Sustainable Development Goals, Member States have committed to eliminating violence against women and are seeking ways to achieve this. Domestic workers' labour rights, on the other hand, are still a relatively neglected national-level policy issue. The research identified some of the drivers of successful advocacy and mobilization on both of these issues in the countries studied, as well as hurdles. The findings should help policymakers, women's rights advocates and funders to effectively strategize, mobilize and support progressive change.

52. The research shows that women's mobilization is essential for gender-egalitarian policy change, but policy change is often slow and incremental. Successful mobilization entails a number of elements, including national democratic space, "gender champions" who complement the efforts of women's movements, and women's "machineries" that build bridges between women's organizations and State actors. Transnational actors, as well as international normative frameworks, can support country-level mobilization for change.

53. With the research findings, the Institute has contributed to the work of the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Committee on the

Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the ILO fourth conference on regulating for decent work. At the country level, the research teams engaged with women's rights activists as beneficiaries of the research findings. A wide range of project outputs were produced during the biennium and are available on the Institute website, including the country case studies and thematic papers, videos and policy briefs. A synthesis paper was published in the journal *Gender & Development* in 2016, and a special section of the journal, *Development and Change*, is forthcoming.

2. Feminization, agricultural transition and rural employment

54. Employment remains the main route to economic empowerment, but women remain disadvantaged both in access to jobs and in the terms of their employment. Many developing countries have expanded their agricultural export sectors beyond traditional crops, often creating new forms of employment for women. The terms under which women are integrated into such agricultural supply chains, and the implications for the well-being of themselves and their families, are however poorly understood.

55. During the biennium, the Institute collaborated with the University of Bern (Switzerland) and partners in Bolivia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Nepal and Rwanda to undertake research on the feminization of non-traditional agriculture and the impacts on women of the commercialization of agriculture for export. Funded by the Swiss Programme for Research on Global Issues for Development, this six-year project began in 2014.

56. The Institute contributed to a range of activities, including cross-country comparative analysis and support to the country-based research teams to strengthen their capacity to undertake gender analysis. Training sessions were organized during project workshops in Rwanda (2015) and the Lao People's Democratic Republic (2016) to co-design quantitative and qualitative methods appropriate for the cross-country comparative research.

3. Feminist analysis of social and solidarity economic practices: views from Latin America and India

57. The Institute is a partner in this project, which was initiated in December 2015 with funding from the Swiss Network for International Studies and is led by the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva.

58. Social and solidarity economic activities can be found in almost all sectors of the economy and are receiving growing attention from scholars and public authorities. However, this interest remains for the most part gender-blind, even though women play a major role in social and solidarity economic activities.

59. While social and solidarity economy can contribute to sustainable development by providing innovative forms of production, consumption, exchange and financing, it can only be truly transformative if it also addresses the reorganization of social reproduction and integrates the political goals of gender equality and more equitable power relations. The research thus aims to fill some of the gaps in social and solidarity economic analysis and policies from a feminist perspective.

60. The Institute's role in this collaborative project is the comparative analysis of the data produced by the country research teams in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil and

India, and the production and dissemination of policy-focused outputs, such as briefs, that aim to communicate the research to an interdisciplinary audience.

4. Future directions

61. Under the Institute strategy 2016-2020, the Institute's work on gender and development will continue to explore the structures and the relations that underpin gendered outcomes, examining the root causes of gender discrimination and inequality, rather than merely the symptoms. The focus on the intersectionality of gender with factors such as age, class and ethnicity will be maintained. In consultation with partners, and depending on the staffing structure for this programme, new research will be developed under the strategic areas of inequalities, conflict and unsustainable practices, with clear connections to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

C. Social dimensions of sustainable development

62. The year 2015 was a milestone for sustainable development. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda marked a new beginning in terms of both process and potential outcomes.

63. The Institute consolidated its programme of work on social dimensions of sustainable development during the biennium, in order to position the Institute as a credible, innovative voice on these issues within and beyond the United Nations system. This has built on past work on integrated and sustainable development, a selection of which was brought together and published in 2015 as *Revisiting Sustainable Development* (UNRISD Classics Volume III), as well as on recent and new work on social and environmental policy linkages and on policy integration and coherence. The Institute took up opportunities to ensure that its research informed the processes and people shaping the 2030 Agenda, and its first year of implementation, including through contribution to key documents and participation in expert groups and other meetings throughout the biennium.

1. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

64. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development resonates strongly with both the substance and the ethos of the Institute's research. This is demonstrated in a comprehensive way in the Institute's 2016 flagship report (see para. 15). A brief, titled "The Sustainable Development Agenda: From Inspiration to Action", was published by the Institute for the 2015 United Nations Sustainable Development Summit.

65. On numerous occasions during the biennium the Institute contributed expertise, analysis and evidence to national-level and United Nations processes around the new global framework. Selected activities included:

(a) Technical assistance to the Republic of Korea in the development of its National Voluntary Review, which was presented at the 2016 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development;

(b) Expertise to a number of activities of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, including the Expert Group meetings on the themes "Social

development and Agenda 2030" and "Strengthening social development in the contemporary world", which provided inputs for the report of the Secretary-General on the Commission's priority theme for 2015-2016, and the 2015 edition of the Global Sustainable Development Report.

(c) Policy recommendations for the Economic and Social Council Integration Segment entitled "Employment and decent work for achieving sustainable development"; and for the report of the Secretary-General "Managing the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the Sustainable Development Goals: What will it take?". The Institute input emphasized that reducing inequality must be recognized as a guiding principle for the post-2015 agenda;

(d) The "Road to Addis and Beyond" series of blogs and think pieces, which discussed prospects and alternatives for sustainable development financing, as a contribution to the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

2. Social and solidarity economy

66. Socially sustainable development requires rethinking the relationship between the organization of the economy and social and sustainability outcomes. Multiple global crises, together with the impetus of the 2030 Agenda, have reignited a search for alternative ways of organizing consumption, production and distribution.

67. Social and solidarity economy refers to forms of production and exchange that aim to satisfy human needs and enhance well-being, build resilience and contribute to sustainability through organizations and relations based on cooperation, association and solidarity.

68. In the period 2015-2016, the Institute continued work initiated in 2013 to understand the potential and the limits of social and solidarity economy in contributing to sustainable development objectives. A new phase of research was designed, with a focus on social and solidarity economy as a means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; measuring the socioeconomic impact of social and solidarity economy; and scaling up social and solidarity economy through enabling conditions. In addition to this project development work, the Institute published *Social and solidarity economy: beyond the fringe?*; organized a research workshop on the theme "Social and solidarity finance"; and participated actively in efforts of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy and others to raise awareness of social and solidarity economy.

69. A highlight in terms of policy engagement and impact took place on the sidelines of the 2015 Sustainable Development Summit, when the Institute represented the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy at a high-level event of the Leading Group on Social and Solidarity Economy. At that meeting, which was organized by France, members of the Leading Group endorsed a draft declaration calling for social and solidarity economy to be considered an integral part of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

70. In December 2015, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) commissioned the Institute to carry out work in support of their strategic objective of reducing rural poverty, by preparing a background note on enabling public policies for social and solidarity economy as a means of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and a brief on methods to

assess, analyse and measure social and solidarity economy. This work also informs the strategic direction of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Social and Solidarity Economy.

3. Social and environmental policy linkages

71. Sustainable development entails prosperity and human well-being within the ecological limits of the planet. This suggests a coexistence of social, environmental and economic development objectives, where there will be trade-offs that must be negotiated. In practice, economic interests often predominate, and the environmental and social pillars are sidelined.

72. There is a growing body of research and policy work on the social dimensions of environmental impacts and climate change. There is less attention to policy approaches that aim to foster the transformation to sustainability by positioning social and environmental priorities above economic ones.

73. In 2015 and 2016, the Institute undertook in-house research, building on previous work on the theme "Social dimensions of green economy", to explore the linkages between environmental and social — or "eco-social" — policies and to identify policy innovations that harness synergies and lead to more inclusive and balanced approaches to sustainable development. The work fed into the Institute's 2016 flagship report (see para. 15) and into the development of a research portfolio that aims to explore the social implications of climate change and sustainability in two key areas: the transition to renewable energies, and climate change adaptation. Several project proposals were developed during the biennium and submitted for funding, including "Enhancing knowledge and capacities for inclusive transitions to renewable energy systems in Asia"; and "Promoting the human security approach for inclusive adaptation to climate change in coastal cities".

4. Future directions

74. Under the Institute strategy 2016-2020, and in the context of the 2030 Agenda, the Social Dimensions of the Sustainable Development Programme will maintain its focus on the intersectionality of social and environmental issues and policies at global, national and local levels. The programme will explore how countries implement innovative eco-social policies that combine environmental and social objectives. It will consider the transformative potential of local practices, including social and solidarity economy and other innovative approaches in urban contexts, their role in supporting a socially inclusive and environmentally sound economic system, and the possibilities for transferring lessons and scaling up. Consultation and fundraising are under way for new projects on the themes "Understanding renewable energy expansion in Central Asia"; "Adapting to climate change: the decision-making process in coastal cities"; "Institutionalizing social and solidarity economy: a comparative international perspective"; "Social and solidarity economy, urban communities and the protection of vulnerable groups in times of crisis"; and "Implementing sustainability through social economy: the case of Seoul".

V. Communications and outreach

75. The mandate of the Institute requires that its research be policy-relevant and engage with pressing issues of concern to the United Nations system and Member States. The Institute aims to ensure that its research reaches a broad range of actors concerned with different facets of social development, and that its findings inform intergovernmental and national policy processes, civil society advocacy and scholarly debates. During the biennium, the Institute pursued a range of innovative and traditional communications and outreach activities to make its research available, accessible and relevant to key stakeholders, to increase its reach and visibility in the global community, and to foster engagement and interaction with audiences. These are reflected in sections II, III and IV of the present report

76. During the reporting period, the Institute also:

(a) Produced a high number of outputs, including 38 research papers; 15 policy and other briefs; 7 books/reports; and 69 blogs and think pieces;³

(b) Used digital communication tools to engage with a wide audience, growing its social media following to nearly 40,000, and producing 53 videos and 28 podcasts;

(c) Fostered face-to-face engagement and dialogue among stakeholders through 36 events organized or co-organized with United Nations, Member State, academic and civil society partners;

(d) Produced 10 issues of an e-bulletin to share research findings and other information with a wide audience (Nos. 22-31, available at www.unrisd.org).

77. An important channel for influence of research of the Institute is the engagement of research staff in advisory and consultative activities for Government and United Nations officials, participation in expert meetings, task force groups and similar activities, and providing verbal or written inputs as required. The Institute staff carried out over 150 advisory and consultative activities in 2015 and 2016.

VI. Institutional issues

78. The Institute receives no funding from the budget of the United Nations and is therefore reliant on the resources it receives from primarily Governments and foundations. The funding context for the Institute has shifted significantly in the last decade, as donors have moved away from institutional funding towards project funding through competitive processes.

79. This shift has helped orient the providers of research towards the demands of funders, and the Institute has welcomed the incentives this has created. At the same time, the Institute's unique characteristics have made it difficult for the Institute to replace declining core funding with that allocated solely for projects. These characteristics include a long-term horizon, insistence on working with and

³ A list of selected Institute publications produced in 2015-2016 is available at <http://www.unrisd.org/csocd-publications-2015-2016>.

strengthening the capacities of researchers of the South, a critical approach and the Institute's position within the architecture of the United Nations.

80. At the beginning of 2016, the Institute's financial position reached a crisis point, with financial reserves depleted and operations threatened. In February 2016, the Director of the Institute wrote to key stakeholders to inform them that without a change in the volume and type of support received by the Institute, operations would cease at the end of May 2016.

81. A seven-month period of engagement with stakeholders raised awareness of the Institute's situation and sought to garner the moral, the political and the financial support necessary to ensure that the Institute could continue its work and eventually reconsolidate on stable foundations.

82. The Institute received strong support from key Member States — Sweden, Switzerland and Finland — departments of the United Nations Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General in particular. As a result of discussions and negotiation with the Institute's principal Government partners and the United Nations system, emergency funds were mobilized to stabilize the Institute. Considerable efforts will be needed in the near future to diversify core funding and increase the proportion of funding coming from projects.

83. On 7 November 2016, the Institute convened a stakeholder meeting with representatives of key bilateral donors and partners, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and Secretariat departments to discuss the Institute's institutional strategy, financing and governance.

A. Management and staffing

84. On 1 June 2015 the director of the Institute, Sarah Cook, stepped down after leading the Institute for five and a half years. On 23 July 2015, the Secretary-General announced the appointment of Paul Ladd of the United Kingdom as director of the Institute. Mr. Ladd took up his functions on 11 October 2015. The position had been advertised through the United Nations recruitment platform, Inspira, and the recruitment process led by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General (Senior Appointments) and administered by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat.

85. As at 30 November 2016, a total of six staff members were under contract at the Institute in Geneva: the director, two senior research coordinators, one communications and outreach staff and two administrative and support staff. The Institute received support from Switzerland for an Expert position in gender (to July 2016) and from Germany for a Junior Professional Officer position on the social dimensions of climate change (2014-2017).

86. Institute projects are supported by junior researchers employed as consultants: in the period 2015-2016 there have been eight research analysts. In addition, four consultants supported communications activities. The Institute also benefited from the support of 18 interns during this period, and hosted 9 visiting research fellows.

87. In the course of 2016, it has become imminent that the Institute decrease its expenditures, owing to lack of funding. Staff separations were made across the different functions (administration, communication and research) so as to retain baseline capacity in each. To that end, the contracts of two research coordinators, the associate editor and the director's personal assistant were not renewed.

B. Governance and Board

88. The Board of the Institute met in Geneva on 16 and 17 April 2015. The Board did not meet in 2016 owing to lack of funding; however, as part of its responsibilities, it approved the relevant documents on a "no objection" basis.

89. The composition of the Board changed during the reporting period. The terms of Bina Agarwal, Evelina Dagnino and Julia Szalai expired on 30 June 2015, after six years.

90. The first term of Maureen O'Neil (Chair), Huang Ping and Patricia Schulz expired on 30 June 2015; the term of Ms. O'Neil was extended by the Secretary-General for two years. The renominations of Mr. Ping and Ms. Schulz to 30 June 2017 were confirmed by the Economic and Social Council.

91. In view of the financial circumstances of the Institute and its reduced staff numbers, the Commission was requested to nominate one new member to the Board at its fifty-third session. Saraswathi Menon's (India) nomination (2015-2019) was confirmed by the Economic and Social Council at its thirty-second plenary meeting. As such, as at July 2015, the Board had eight nominated members and two seats were vacant.

C. Financial report

92. The Institute receives no money from the United Nations general budget and is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from Governments, research foundations, United Nations agencies and other institutions.

93. As at 30 November and with 2016 accounts still open, the total income of the Institute (excluding miscellaneous income) for the period 2015-2016 was estimated at \$5.068 million (see table). Estimated total expenditures are \$5.620 million.

94. Institutional (non-earmarked) funding is estimated at \$4.391 million, of which \$400,000 are from Finland, \$2.720 million are from Sweden and \$1.261 million are from Switzerland (see table).

95. The Institute is currently dependent on two principal funders — the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency and Switzerland (the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) — for financing institutional costs and key research, communications and impact activities.

96. The two-year extension (2015-2016) of the multi-year funding agreement with the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency expires at the end of 2016. The three-year agreement with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (2014-2016) also expires at the end of 2016.

97. At the time of writing, renewal of these agreements is under consideration, as is a multi-year agreement with Finland (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health) and Switzerland (Ministry of Foreign Affairs). Such multi-year agreements ensure predictable funding flows and underpin the future stability of the Institute.

98. Earmarked (project) funding is estimated at \$676,703. Finland (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) provided support for work on the Institute's "Linking social protection and human rights" activity. Other funds were provided by the United Nations Development Programme, the Ministry of Health of Brazil, several other United Nations agencies, foundations and non-governmental organizations (see table).

99. Important contributions not reflected in the table came from the Government of Germany (a Junior Professional Officer, 2014-2017), the Government of Switzerland (a seconded gender Expert, to July 2016), and the United Nations Office at Geneva (office space and programme support).

Funding sources, 2015-2016*

(United States dollars)

Donor

Countries

Brazil, Ministry of Health/Hospital do Coração	65 000
Finland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	109 623
Finland, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health	400 000
Sweden, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency	2 720 277
Switzerland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs	396 292
Switzerland, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	864 882
United Kingdom, Department for International Development	21 148

United Nations agencies

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	75 000
International Labour Organization	12 312
United Nations Development Programme	170 000
United Nations Environment Programme	10 000

Research foundations and other funders

Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung	20 033
Ford Foundation	71 290
The Graduate Institute	20 774
National Center for Social Studies	15 000
University of Bern	72 523
Hankuk University of Foreign Studies	24 000

Total	5 068 154
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* Estimates as at 30 November 2016, excluding miscellaneous income and in-kind contributions.



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Commission for Social Development

Fifty-fifth session

1-10 February 2017

**Programme questions and other matters: United Nations
Research Institute for Social Development**

Nomination of members of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The functions of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, which are set out in paragraph 3 of document ST/SGB/126 of 1 August 1963 and in its addenda, are:

(a) To lay down general rules governing the action of the Institute in matters entrusted to it;

(b) To review and approve work programmes and the relevant budgets of the Institute;

(c) To submit regularly to the Commission for Social Development a progress report on the work of the Institute.

2. At present, the Board is composed of:

(a) A Chair, appointed by the Secretary-General;

(b) Eight members nominated by the Commission for Social Development and confirmed by the Economic and Social Council, with two seats vacant;

(c) A representative of the Secretary-General;

(d) Representatives of selected United Nations specialized agencies, departments and regional entities who participate as observers;

(e) The Director of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, ex officio.



3. The term of office of the members of the Board referred to in paragraph 2 (b) above is four years, renewable once for a further period of two years.¹

4. Maureen O'Neil (Canada) has been Chair of the Board since 2011. The nominated members of the Board are:

Jimi Adesina (South Africa), Professor and Department of Science and Technology/National Research Foundation South African Research Chairs Initiative Chair of Social Policy, University of South Africa

Asef Bayat (United States of America), Professor of Sociology, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

Ping Huang (China), Director, Institute of American Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

David Hulme (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Professor, School of Environment and Development, University of Manchester

Saraswathi Menon (India), former Director, Policy Division, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)

Joakim Palme (Sweden), Professor of Political Science, Department of Government, Uppsala University

Patricia Schulz (Switzerland), Expert, Commission on the Status of Women

Onalenna Selolwane (Botswana), Senior Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Botswana

5. The term of office of the following two members will expire on 30 June 2017. They will have served on the Board for six years:

Ping Huang, Patricia Schulz

6. The term of office of the following five members will expire on 30 June 2017, and they are eligible for renomination for a further period of two years:

Jimi Adesina, Asef Bayat, David Hulme, Joakim Palme, Onalenna Selolwane

7. At its fifty-fifth session, the Commission will be called upon to extend the terms of office of the five members referred to in paragraph 6 above for an additional two-year term expiring on 30 June 2019.

8. In view of the current financial circumstances of the Institute and its reduced staff numbers as a result of resource constraints, at its fifty-fifth session the Commission is requested to consider nominating only one new member, to replace one of the members referred to in paragraph 5 above. Consequently, in July 2017 the Board would have seven members and three seats would be left vacant.

9. Should the Commission agree to this proposal, it will be called upon to nominate one new member for a four-year term expiring on 30 June 2021. The biographical information of the new candidate is contained in the annex to the present note.

¹ In its resolution 10 (XXV), the Commission decided that the term of office of each nominated member of the Board should not exceed a total of six years.

Annex

Biographical information*

Sylvie Durrer (Switzerland)

Personal data

Date of birth: 1960

Present position

Director, Swiss Federal Office for Gender Equality

Experience

Chief, Cantonal Office for Gender Equality, Vaud (2006-2011)

Assistant Professor, French Linguistics, University of Lausanne (2001-2006)

Co-Director, Doctoral Programme in Gender Studies, Universities of Geneva and Lausanne (2001-2004)

Assistant Professor, French Linguistics, University of Zurich (1996-2001)

Lecturer, French Linguistics, University of Zurich (1992-1996)

Education

Executive Diploma in Public Policy Management, Swiss Graduate School of Public Administration (IDHEAP)

Ph.D., French Linguistics, University of Lausanne

M.A., Literature, University of Lausanne

* Curricula vitae are issued without formal editing.